

## **1 post-doctoral fellowship for a research project on Modernist reinventions of the rural landscapes**

### **Description**

In the framework of the MODSCAPES project, a collaborative research project funded under the HERA-Humanities in the European Research Area JRP-Joint Research Program 3rd call (dedicated to “Uses of the Past”), we are looking for highly talented and motivated candidates for **1 postdoctoral position** at the Université libre de Bruxelles.

The MODSCAPES project is carried out through a collaboration between five academic partners:

- Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) – HABITER research center at the Faculty of Architecture La Cambre-Horta (<http://archi.ulb.ac.be/recherche/centre-de-recherche/habiter>);
- Politecnico di Milano (Italy) ABC dept. of Architecture, Built Environment and Construction Engineering;
- CESAP – Cooperativa de Ensino Superior Artística do Porto (Portugal): CEAA – Centro de Estudos Arnaldo Araújo Studies Centre;
- TUBerlin (Germany): Habitat Unit / Chair of International Urbanism and Design – Institute of Architecture, Faculty IV Planning Building Environment;
- EMU - Estonian University of Life Sciences, Tartu (Estonia): Institute of Agricultural and Environmental Science, dept. of Landscape Architecture.

The academic partners are supported by three non-academic partners:

- DoCoMoMo International – Documentation and COnservation of buildings, sites and neighbourhoods of the MODern MOVement (Lisbon, Portugal);
- ECLAS European Council of Landscape Architecture Schools (Vienna, Austria);
- CIVILSCAPE (Bonn, Germany).

The partners are also involved in establishing local partnerships with other public bodies and civic associations.

MODSCAPES deals with rural landscapes produced by large-scale agricultural development and colonization schemes planned in the 20th century throughout Europe and beyond. Conceived in different political and ideological contexts, such schemes were pivotal to nation-building and state-building policies, and to the modernization of the countryside. They provided a testing ground for the ideas and tools of environmental and social scientists, architects, engineers, planners, landscape architects and artists, which converged around a shared challenge. Their implementation produced new rural landscapes which have seldom been considered as a transnational research topic. Hence, MODSCAPES aims to raise awareness around this largely underestimated shared cultural heritage which stands today as a tangible evidence of recent European history.

MODSCAPES is carried out by a team gathering expertise in architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, planning, art history and anthropology. It is led by five experienced individual investigators, with the support of four associated partners of international relevance in their specific areas of activities. MODSCAPES combines research-driven and bottom-up participatory activities based on the collection, treatment, elaboration, and critical discussion of visual data and multiple narratives regarding 10 case studies

located in 7 EU- and 3 non-EU neighbouring countries. Introducing the concept of landscape as a unifying paradigm for a trans-disciplinary approach to the topic's tangible (the built environment) and intangible legacies (the related cultural and socio-political contexts), this project aims to establish its European relevance, but also to bridge research, practice and policies. Hence, it aspires to test its outcomes against the current challenges faced by modern rural landscapes as a resource for future “reflective societies” and “inclusive environments”. MODSCAPES' various deliverables and activities engage and target diversified audiences to enable a better understanding of the common patterns and rich diversities which shaped our national identities and may help to support shared European narratives.

The candidate will integrate the ULB team, coordinated by prof. Luisa MORETTO, and work in collaboration with the other team members:

- prof. Axel FISHER, an FNRS post-doctoral fellow dealing with three case studies (Pontine Marshes – Italy, Ebro Valley – Spain, Jezreel Valley – Israel/Palestinian Territories);
- arch. Michele Tenzon, an FNRS doctoral fellow dealing with the case-study of the Gharb plain – Morocco

The candidate will contribute to the ULB team's leadership on two of the MODSCAPES project's work packages:

- “documenting” agricultural development and colonization schemes;
- “changes and challenges” faced by modernist rural landscapes.

In particular, the candidate will contribute to develop an original reflection on analytical tools to analyse and understand the whole process which eventually led to the production of modernist rural landscapes. Similarly, he/she will test innovative methodologies for identifying current changes and challenges occurring in modernist rural landscapes, and for governing these changes, such as for instance design-driven exploratory scenario-building strategies.

## **Research environment**

[Université libre de Bruxelles \(ULB\)](#) is a top Belgian and top-101/150 (ARWU-Academic Ranking of World Universities 2015) to top-207 world universities (QS World University Rankings® 2015/16). ULB is an active member of the EU Research Area and is involved in almost 130 FP7-funded projects. 4 scientific Nobel Prizes, 1 Fields Medal, 3 Wolf Prizes and 2 Marie Curie Prizes evidence ULB's longstanding tradition of excellence. Over the past few years, it has obtained 9 ERC Grants. ULB's annual research budget stands at €160m, approximately 75% of which comes from international, national, and regional research agreements, as well as from the patronage of a range of Foundations. The ULB's [Faculty of Architecture](#) is French-speaking Belgium's largest and most dynamic institution for education and research in the fields of architecture, urbanism, and landscape. The Faculty's research centres established in 2011, CLARA and HABITER, have already attracted some €3m research funding. The study centre [HABITER](#) at ULB's Faculty of Architecture is engaged with the study of landscape, urban and territorial transformation dynamics in the North as

well as in the South of the world. Its activities are focused on cooperation and development issues at large, with an ecological and cultural approach to sustainability and context. Since its creation in June 2013, HABITER has managed to attract around €2m from regional, national and European research programs, dealing with built heritage, rural landscapes, development cooperation, urban planning, sustainable urbanism and buildings. At present, HABITER relies on a staff of 24 persons (academics, post-doc and junior researchers, PhDs candidates, administrator). Extensive research on MODSCAPES' topic has been built up over time at HABITER, with the organization of an [ESF-funded](#) exploratory research workshop (2013, "[Promised Lands: internal colonization in 20th century Mediterranean history](#)"), and around the unpublished archives of French architect Michel Écochard's plans of [rural development](#) for the [Gharb Valley in Morocco](#) held at the centre.

### Tasks:

- To support the work conducted on literature review, archival and field research on the indicated case study, in elaborating the project's conceptual and methodological framework;
- To attend the team's project meetings
- To attend the HABITER Study centre's meetings (every 2 months)
- To collaborate to the research project management and to the organization of MODSCAPES' planned events and activities;
- To produce conference papers and contributions, as well as collaborate to the project's planned deliverables, including scientific papers in international journals and MODSCAPES project reports, papers, monograph and exhibition;
- To support the development and the management of MODSCAPES' online tools, including the project's website, and its online archive cataloguing tool, with opportunities to further develop his/her skills in communication and digital humanities.

### Requirements:

- Doctoral degree either in architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, regional planning, cultural geography. Other qualifications may be well-accepted.
- Strong interest for Modernist architecture and urban design, for geography and rural development, for colonial studies and cultural heritage; excellent knowledge of 20th century architectural and urban design history and theory; original perspective on the current practice and research trends in the discipline;
- Experience in the field (archival research, fieldwork, surveys, architectural / urban / landscape design);
- Advanced user skills in Office-like applications; excellent skills in Adobe Suite; excellent skills in 2D-vector drawing applications (Autocad or the like);
- knowledge of GIS applications and management of georeferenced databases.
- Knowledge of Wordpress and OMEKA (in particular in working with Dublin Core standards) are a plus.

### Languages:

- Fluency in English, both oral and written, for integrating the European research team. B2 level is a minimal requirement;
- Basic knowledge of French for integration and administrative requirements is a plus;
- Good knowledge of German, and basic knowledge of Italian, Portuguese, Greek, and/or Spanish are a plus for interacting with the European research team and their case studies;

### Mobility/travel:

Possible travels to case study areas. Regular travels to partners' host institutions (Italy, Portugal, Greece, Germany, Estonia, Lithuania).

Possible short travels abroad to attend conferences and networking activities.

### Place of work:

The team's main headquarters are at the Université libre de Bruxelles' Faculty of Architecture La Cambre (Place Flagey, 19 – 1050, Brussels), where office space and basic facilities are provided.

However, constant physical presence is not strictly required. Telecommuting is possible, especially if done from one of the MODSCAPES partner's institutions abroad.

### Job specificities:

- Full-time (candidates may not carry out any other professional activity nor receive any remuneration or salary for such activities, including any freelance or self-employed activity);
- Duration:
  - For nationals of one of the Member States of the European Economic Area (EEA), or any country having agreed a bilateral social security agreement with Belgium<sup>1</sup> : **9 to 10 months**
  - For other applicants : **Up to 11 months**
- Net monthly income of scholarship (exempt from income tax<sup>2</sup>), paid on a monthly basis: **2.347,32€** (incl. holiday bonuses to be partially recovered by the next employer)
- Visa requirements :
  - No visa is required by Swiss nationals or nationals of one of the Member States of the European Economic Area (EEA).
  - Foreign nationals who already hold a permanent Belgian identity card, generally obtained through family ties, are not required to obtain a visa.

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<sup>1</sup> Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Switzerland, Algeria, Australia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, South Korea, Croatia, the United States of America, India, Israel, Japan, Kosovo, Macedonia, Morocco, the Philippines, the Republic of Montenegro, San Marino, Serbia, Tunisia, Turkey and Uruguay.

<sup>2</sup> Tax exemption is granted for the duration of the postdoctoral fellowship, with a maximum duration of 36 months. Tax exemption is granted only once to the same person.

- Nationals of a state that is not part of the EEA or who are not from Switzerland must obtain a **Type D visa before their arrival** in Belgium in order to gain access to the Belgian territory.
- Scholarship includes full healthcare costs and social security entitlements;
- Nationals of one of the Member States of the European Economic Area (EEA), or any country having agreed a bilateral social security agreement with Belgium are also entitled to the Belgian social security regime covering health insurance, maternity, invalidity, pension insurance and unemployment insurance, insurance against workplace accidents, occupational diseases allowances and family allowances.
- Costs for travel, international mobility stays, fieldwork, publications, purchase of research material are budgeted for by the awarded funding for the MODSCAPES project (limited amounts);
- Successful candidates may not carry out any other professional activity nor receive any remuneration or salary for such activities, including any freelance or self-employed activity. They may hold no other position within the Université libre de Bruxelles, irrespective of whether or not they are paid.
- The fellowship is awarded to **international mobility researchers** who have earned their PhD degree **after January 8<sup>th</sup> 2010**. 'International research mobility' implies that the fellow **has not resided or carried out his/her main activity** (employment, studies, etc.) **in Belgium for more than 24 months during the last 3 years** preceding the postdoctoral assignment. Short stays such as holidays, conference participation or a short stay to prepare for the postdoctoral assignment are not taken into account when checking whether this condition is met.
- Starting date: **January 8th 2018**.

Nr of positions available: 1

### Research Fields

Architectural, urban design, landscape, planning history, theory and design, geography, digital humanities

### Career Stage

Early stage researcher or Post graduate (maximum 8 years elapsed from obtaining the last PhD degree at the time of entering position).

The postdoctoral fellowship is open to holders of either:

1. a doctoral degree for a value of at least 180 credits awarded by a Higher Education Institution within the French-speaking Community of Belgium;
2. a doctoral degree for a value of at least 180 credits awarded by a Higher Education Institution within the Dutch-speaking Community, German-speaking Community or from the Royal Military Academy.

3. Any degree as referred to in Article 115 of the Decree of 7th November 2013 of the French-speaking Community of Belgium that defines the landscape of Higher Education and the academic studies organization<sup>3</sup>.

PhD candidates who are expected to be awarded their PhD degree as referred to above prior to January 8th 2018 may also submit their application.

### Comment/web site for additional job details

- Provisional website of the MODSCAPES project: <https://modscapes.eu>
- Guide and regulations for ULB research fellowships:  
[http://www.ulb.ac.be/drh/prc/prc-docs/Fellowships\\_guide.pdf](http://www.ulb.ac.be/drh/prc/prc-docs/Fellowships_guide.pdf)
- Protection and ownership of research results (in French):  
<https://www.ulb.ac.be/ulb/greffe/documents/docs/Prorech.pdf>

### Applications

This is a two-stage selection process.

For stage one, please send your application, in pdf format and via email (max. 1Mb, or download link), to prof. Axel FISHER ([axel.fisher@ulb.ac.be](mailto:axel.fisher@ulb.ac.be)) as soon as possible, and no later than **November 24<sup>th</sup> 2017 (23:59, CET time)**. Your application should include:

- a motivation letter, including a short career plan;
- a detailed CV (including your publications list);
- up to 3 relevant publications;
- an electronic version of your PhD thesis;
- the contact details of two external referees;

For stage two: a first pool of pre-selected candidates will be invited to an (online or face-to-face) interview, between November 27<sup>th</sup> and December 5<sup>th</sup> 2017 (approximately). This interview will focus on the skills and competences of the candidates, as well as on their motivation letter.

The selected candidate will be informed before December 8<sup>th</sup> 2017, and invited to complete the administrative part of his/her application as soon as possible (before December 15<sup>th</sup> 2017), including the following documents (with legally sworn translation if issued in a language other than French, Dutch, English, Italian, German or Spanish):

- a legally certified copy of your original Master **and** PhD degree;
- a certificate of your prior employer(s), or any equivalent document, proving: full-time equivalent, period of employment, position held;
- birth certificate;
- any document certifying that you have completed your duties in matter of compulsory military/civil service, or that you are exempt of such obligation;
- household composition certificate;

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<sup>3</sup> Usually, Phd degrees awarded in a country who had adhered to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) when the degree was awarded are normally recognized as equivalent. In case of doubt, take contact with the Belgian embassy in the country who delivered the degree.

The MODSCAPES partners, including the ULB team, are committed to equal opportunity and positive discrimination recruitment policies.

In case the applications received do not fulfill the requirements or expectations, the Université libre de Bruxelles has no obligation whatsoever to award the fellowship.

In case the successful applicant's administrative files showed uncomplete or inaccurate, the Université libre de Bruxelles has no obligation whatsoever to award the fellowship.

The award of the fellowship is subject to approval of the available funding by the Université libre de Bruxelles' authorities.

For more details about this position, about the application process, and about the research project, please contact (ideally via email):

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Research unit: <https://www.ulb.ac.be/rech/inventaire/unites/ULB759.html>